

Vessel Name	_____
Hull Number	_____
Date Landed	_____

Northeast Fisheries Observer Program
PRE TRIP VESSEL SAFETY CHECKLIST

Please place a T in the box next to each item only if that item has been checked and is appropriate for the size of this vessel and distance operating offshore. If you have any questions regarding requirements please refer to your copy of "Federal Requirements for Commercial Fishing Industry Vessels".

- Vessel walk through
While locating/checking the below items note general condition of vessel.
- Current USCG Commercial Fishing Vessel Safety Examination Decal
Locate Vessel Safety Examination Decal and check expiration date (good for 2 years).
- EPIRB
Locate Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon. Check hydrostatic release service date.
Required for all vessels operating beyond 3 miles.
- Life raft(s)
Locate life raft(s). Check hydrostatic release service date. Is capacity correct for everyone on board including the observer?
Within 12 miles of coast, 3 people or less and vessel length < 36' = no requirement. All others required to have some type of a survival craft.
- Immersion suits and personal floatation devices
Are there enough for everyone on board? Keep yours accessible.
- Radio(s)
Locate radio(s).
- Fire extinguishers
Locate and check service date.
Not required on vessels < 26' with outboard motor(s).
- Emergency signaling flares
Locate emergency signaling flares. Check expiration date(s).
- First aid material
Locate first aid supplies/kit.
- Life rings
Locate life rings.
Vessels > 26' = 1 life ring buoy; Vessels > 65' = 3 life ring buoys.
- Station billet
If one is posted determine your role during all shipboard emergencies

Observer's signature

Date

Trip ID #

Comments on back

The following are examples of things that you should/could check when doing a vessel walk through. They are listed here to assist you when determining the relative safety of a particular vessel. It is not supposed to be a comprehensive list, but rather one that is intended to stimulate thought.

- Does the vessel seem well maintained? Is it neat, clean and being run by a crew that is careful and prepared?
- Any visible hydraulic leaks?
- Is the vessel being used for the purpose it was originally designed?
- Do obvious hazards exist? Note potentially hazardous areas/conditions.
- Identify the watertight doors (interior and exterior). Can they be secured in case of heavy weather or emergencies?
- Are any hatches or passageways blocked or difficult to get to?
- Does deck gear look to be in good working order? Are shackles and blocks worn excessively (especially ones that are overhead)?
- Is vessel long overdue for a haul out (excessive growth at waterline or hull paint in poor condition)?
- How often is the bilge pump going on?
- How high off of the deck is the fish hold hatch and is it in good condition? Are there any other openings on deck and are they covered with hatches?
- Would anything prevent you from abandoning ship from the living quarters?
- What are the escape routes from every part of the vessel you might find yourself? Visualize egress for all possible scenarios (fire, flooding, capsized, dark, etc.) and mentally note landmarks.
- What are the most combustible items onboard and where are they stored?
- Are there any exposed exhaust pipes/manifolds that might pose burn hazards?
- While you are at sea note the roll period. Generally a boat with a quick, snappy roll is more stable than a boat that has a slow or sluggish roll period. A boat that seems to hesitate, on its side, before righting could be unstable.
- Does the vessel list excessively?
- Is there heavy equipment on deck that is not lashed down?
- Are there any exposed drive chains, pulleys or belts?
- Are there safety issues involved with boarding?
- Is there a sufficient amount of scuppers and are they large enough to be effective?

Are there emergency instructions for, or did the captain give a safety orientation explaining the following:

- Survival craft embarkation stations?
- Survival craft assignments?
- Fire/emergency/abandon ship signals?
- Procedures for rough weather sea?
- Procedures for recovering person overboard?
- Procedures for fighting a fire?
- Essential actions required of each person in an emergency?

WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU CHECKED YOUR PERSONAL SAFETY EQUIPMENT ??????

Comments: